REMARKS

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

Claims 10 - 18 remain pending.

The courtesy of the Examiner at the interview with Applicants' undersigned attorney on June 7, 2007 is greatly appreciated. The substance of the interview is believed accurately set forth in the Interview Summary issued by the Examiner at the conclusion of the interview and in the remarks that follow.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1, 16 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons set forth on page 3 of the Action. Claims 1 and 18 were objected to as not providing sufficient antecedent basis for certain limitations in the claims. Claim 16 was objected to as being confusing in the last sentence.

By this Amendment, claims 1 and 18 have been amended in a manner in which it is believed satisfies all the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112.

Claim 16 has also been amended to more clearly recite Applicants' invention so that it also now satisfies the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 10 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Singhal U. S. Patent 6,163,782 in view of Subramaniam et al. U. S. Patent 5,859,972.

For the reasons set forth hereafter, it is submitted that claims 10 and 18, as now amended, all patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Allowable Subject Matter

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Claims 11-17 were not rejected on the prior art but the Examiner indicated

they would not be indicated as allowable until after a response to this Action has

been reviewed. As noted above, claim 16 has been amended in a manner in which

it is believed satisfies all rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 11-17 remain

dependent from claim 10 since it is believed that amended claim 10, from which they

all depend, is now allowable.

Patentability of the Claims

In rejecting claims 10-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103, it was the Examiner's

position that Singhal teaches the claimed invention but does not explicitly disclose

automatically conducting a second search of the second document database based

on the second search input. The Examiner further stated, however, that

Subramaniam et al. teaches automatically conducting a second search of a second

document database based on a second search input and that therefore it would have

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have modified Singhal by the

teaching of Subramaniam et al. to include automatically conducting a second search

of a second document database based on a second search input because it allows

for faster and more efficient access to two or more selected databases to be

searched.

As discussed hereafter, however, both Singhal and Subramaniam et al. only

teach use of computer systems where a single search input is directed to a plurality

of databases whereas Applicants' invention provides for both a first search input and

then a second search input which may be broadened more than the input of the first

search, thus allowing the users to find relevant documents that would not be

expected under the first search input.

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The present invention as defined in claims 10 and 18 is characterized by a document search method wherein a client transmits a first search input to a first server to receive a first search result, preparing a weighted term list or topic words based on the first search result and using the weighted term list or the topic words as a second search input to a second server, to obtain a second search result.

The first search input contains a set of terms used for the database searching. The first search result contains a set of terms, including the terms contained in the first search input, larger than the first search input. Therefore, the second search input frequently becomes a larger set of terms than the first search input, even if in the second search input, the user has excluded unnecessary terms from the first search result. At a minimum, the second search input would include terms not found in the first search input. Thus, the scope of the second search is broader than that of the first search, allowing the user to find relevant documents that would not be expected under the first search input.

Singhal discloses a computer system where the document databases or sub-collection of documents are distributed among a plurality of local computers. In Singhal, a single search input is directed through a search query to the plurality of local computers (column 6, lines 10-33). No matter how many local computers are involved in the search, the scope of the search is the same for all the document databases connected to the local computers. The search results are not more than what is acquired under a single search scope.

Subramaniam et al. discloses a system where a local workstation can access a plurality of databases through a gateway server. Through the screens of the local workstation, the user can select more than one database, build a query consisting of

search terms and AND/OR operators, and obtain the search result (Figs. 5A, 5B and 5C; column 8, lines 15-42). Like Singhal, Subramaniam et al. teaches nothing more than a computer environment where a single search input is directed to a plurality of databases.

Thus, even if the teachings of Singhal and Subramaniam et al. are combined, their combined teachings do not render obvious Applicants' invention as now defined in claims 10 and 18. Allowance of these claims is therefore respectfully requested. Since claim 10 is now believed allowable, claims 11-17 depending there from are also believed to be allowable.

Respectfully submitted,

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